



Leelanau County group picks up national award in Los Angeles. See story on page 16.

Employee Recognition Program

Lansing ceremony honors exemplary FIA employees FIA director, deputy present award to 13 workers

LANSING—Family Independence Agency director Douglas E. Howard and deputy director Mark Jasonowicz presided over the second annual Employee Recognition Program during an administrative meeting in Lansing May 31.

During the ceremony, 13 workers from around the state were recognized as exemplary employees of the Family Independence Agency. Their awards were presented during a morning meeting at the Lansing Center.

Instituted in August 1998, the Employee Recognition Program bestows

continues on page 6

Electronic Benefits Transfer starts in Jackson County

Cash assistance benefits delivered electronically in pilot area

The world changed June 1 when Michigan started using an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system to deliver cash and food stamp benefits to Family Independence Agency customers in Jackson County.

Effective June 1, FIA food stamps and cash assistance customers in Jackson County are using a

plastic card called the Michigan Bridge Card to electronically obtain their benefits. Cash benefits can be obtained from enrolled retailers and automated teller machines, and food benefits can be redeemed at federally authorized food stamp retailers.

Governor John Engler made the announcement June 1.

“EBT is a winning prescription,” said Engler. “It has succeeded at cutting costs and modernizing services in 30 states. It will vigorously complement Michigan’s leadership in human services delivery.”

Under EBT, cash assistance customers will use their “Bridge Card” — a product similar to an ATM or debit card — to purchase goods and obtain cash benefits at enrolled retailers or ATMs. All Jackson County retailers who previously accepted federal food stamps are enrolled as EBT retailers.

“The benefits of EBT are many,” said Engler. “Customers will not have to wait for their stamps to arrive in the mail or travel to pick

FIA Icon for July 2000

In this issue

| | |
|---|---------|
| FIA employees assist in birth | page 2 |
| From the director | page 3 |
| No job, bad relationship, no car, pregnant...no problem | page 4 |
| Employee Recognition Program recipients | |
| Sharon Christensen and Howard Cleveland | page 6 |
| Patricia Cook and Lynn Ettinger | page 7 |
| Rick Franz and Steve Hinkley | page 8 |
| Rita Hotchkin and Diane Kenefic | page 9 |
| Marcia Kus and Charlotte Morris | page 10 |
| Donna O’Grady | page 11 |
| Cynthia Smith and Rick Whitis | page 12 |
| NASW Michigan honors two FIA workers | page 13 |
| FIA-university agreement nets 34 graduates..... | page 14 |
| 400 justice practitioners attend recent conference | page 15 |
| Leelanau County group feted with national award | page 16 |
| Report says Family Reunification Program looking good | page 17 |
| Project Zero programs continue to reach “zero” | page 18 |
| April caseload lowest in 30 years | page 19 |
| Photo Story: Monroe County FIA | page 19 |
| “Love bug” virus doesn’t love FIA | page 20 |

continues on page 2

FIA employees assist in birth

DETROIT—Three employees at the since-closed Northwest Detroit Youth Reception Center, a former FIA facility, received special commendation for assisting with the birth of a child at the center April 12.

Tim Tolliver, Ferial Holcomb and Mitchell Golson were on duty when the baby's 17-year-old mother, a resident at the facility, suddenly

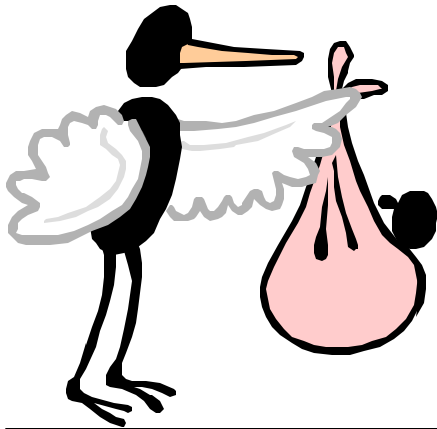
went into intensive labor. With no time to get to the hospital, the three employees got a mattress and towels and called 9-1-1. Emergency room personnel talked them through the birth and dispatched an ambulance. By the time the ambulance arrived less than 20 minutes later, the baby—a healthy full term boy—was born.

Tolliver, Holcomb and Golson were commended for their quick and decisive actions and for the calm they displayed under pressure that aided in the mother's comfort and ease during her delivery.

Pregnancy training is part of the annual standard training at Northwest Detroit Youth Reception Center. The training was given most recently only a month earlier, in

March. The three staff persons made the best possible use of their training. After a few days under hospital attention, mother and baby were reported doing fine.

Closed in May, the center was a detention and short-term placement center for females.



EBT starts in Jackson County

continued from page 1

them up. They will use their card to manage their cash assistance accounts just like everyone does with a debit card and bank account.”

Family Independence Agency director Douglas E. Howard said there are other benefits.

“We believe EBT will increase the dignity with which clients access their benefits. We think this because they will be using plastic cards to pay for their goods or services just like many other customers of the store,” Howard said. “This has the potential to help increase client self confidence at a time when they are making every effort to become independent of public assistance.”

Michigan contracted with Citicorp Services Inc., the leading national provider of EBT services, to implement its program. They will maintain a 7-day, 24-hour customer

service help line.

Customers will use the help line to report lost or stolen cards, select or change personal identification numbers, and to find stores that accept the Bridge Card. In addition, EBT customers will receive written training or can choose to attend video training on using their new card.

“EBT has significant benefits for the business and retailer community,” said Engler. “The process will save time at checkout lanes, eliminate paperwork requirements and add security to economic transactions.”

The project is being piloted in Jackson County and will begin statewide expansion several months after its successful trial. It is expected to be available in all Michigan counties within 18 months.



FIA Icon

*a publication of Michigan's
Family Independence Agency*

John Engler, Governor

Douglas E. Howard, Director
Family Independence Agency

Karen Smith, Director

Office of Communications

Larry VanDeSande, Editor



Editorial Board

Sue Doby

*Information Technology
Management Services*

Anna Gallagher

*Office of the Director /
Deputy Director*

Julie DeHaan Horn

*Office of Reengineering
and Quality Management*

Mary Mehren

Child and Family Services

George Noonan

Field Operations

Anne Sinicropi Sigourney
Family Independence Services

Gary Swan

Office of Human Resources

Patrick Vaughan

*Budget, Analysis
and Financial Management*



From the Director

By Douglas E. Howard

Director, Family Independence Agency

Rewarding excellence in the FIA

I have three avowed goals in my work life: work hard, have fun and celebrate success. I spent a lot of time doing all three at a May 31 meeting in Lansing.

It was an honor to recognize 13 Family Independence Agency employees for their outstanding work performance and many others for various achievements. This was an occasion when we could all take pride in our work as seen through the impressive accomplishments of our coworkers.

The Employee Recognition Awards program is an effort to give special acknowledgment to exemplary employees. While it cannot represent everyone who does great things every year, we think this program has in two short years become a mantle for exceptional performance in our agency. This year's award winners, both individually and as a group, represent the best work going on in our agency and symbolize the good work of their friends and coworkers in the FIA. They represent the hard work and dedication all FIA employees have made helping Michigan be a national leader in the welfare reform and child and family services.

Many other employees and FIA offices received awards at the May 31 meeting. Two other FIA employees—Ricardo Cummings and Roger Curtis—were given special recognition by the Child Welfare League of America for outstanding service. Another pair of FIA employees—Chris Stabile and Debra Cain—received awards from the National Association of Social Workers (see related story later in this newsletter). Stabile received the NASW 2000 “Lisa Putman Award for Excellence in Child Welfare”.

A lot of other people took home awards, too. Thirty-two office directors and the FIA Child and Family Services Administration received “Special Affirmative Action Awards”. Three FIA juvenile justice facilities—Pine Lodge Residential Care Center, Genesee Valley Regional Center and Western Wayne Community Juvenile Justice Center—earned special awards for achieving certain goals and outcomes. A number of Project Zero counties received awards, also.

These commendations represent excellence from people all over the FIA. Our continued success in delivering services and managing resources in the future depends on how well we meet the professional challenges today and in the future. This will only happen with the assistance of staff like you and your coworkers. Working together, I am confident we will continue to do an excellent job providing services to Michigan citizens. Thanks to all FIA employees for your dedication to the mission of our agency.

No job, bad relationship, no car, pregnant..no problem

Achiever of the Month overcomes multiple burdens to job and academic success

By Louise Wing, Program Manager

Ionia Montcalm District Family Independence Agency

Telephone (517) 831-8512

STANTON—Michelle Rios is a textbook example of the journey to self-sufficiency.

She arrived in Michigan with all the barriers: she had just left a difficult relationship, she had one young child and was pregnant for her second, she did not have a job, she had transportation and day care issues, and she was new to the area. She found herself in a situation that would be trying for any of us, but Michelle persevered, then succeeded.

And so it was with great pride that the Montcalm County FIA office held the 78th Achiever of the Month ceremony May 19, recognizing Michelle Rios as the May 2000 recipient.

Ionia Montcalm District FIA director Philip Larson began the ceremony by introducing state FIA director Douglas E. Howard. Howard talked about the collaboration of many partners that is necessary for success.

"It is clear to me that this honor also reflects very favorably on the Montcalm County Family Independence Agency staff who have made significant contributions to (Michelle's) success," he said.

"There have also been many other people, doing a number of small or large tasks, that have helped to clear the way for her to succeed. I am pleased to have this opportunity to



Michelle Rios

thank the Michigan Works Agency, Work First of Montcalm and the many family and friends that have contributed to her success."

Michelle's journey

Michelle combined her own work ethic, determination and concern for her children with the help and support of all these other players to become the success she is today.

Michelle is the single mother of two boys—Tony, who is 7 and Taylor, who is 6. Both boys attended the ceremony.

Michelle left Oklahoma and came to Michigan in 1993 to escape a difficult relationship that she knew was not good for her children or herself. She came to Montcalm County because her mother lives here. She offered Michelle emotional support and a roof over her head.

Michelle's mother joined the celebration at the ceremony. Michelle's brother and his children also live nearby and Michelle received emotional and practical support from him.

In the past few years, Michelle has returned the favors, demonstrating just how important family support can be. At the ceremony, Michelle's brother made a touching speech about how Michelle has become a "mom" figure to his kids since he lost his wife several years ago. And Michelle's mother recently went through a serious illness, and Michelle was there to help care for her.

Driven to succeed

When Michelle came to the Montcalm FIA office, she applied for and received AFDC, Medicaid, and food stamps. This allowed Michelle to provide for her family on a temporary basis. She was determined that it would be only temporary. Michelle has a strong work ethic, having worked steadily in Oklahoma and she immediately began plans to enter the employment market in Michigan.

In 1993, Michelle sought and obtained a student loan and enrolled in a cosmetology program to learn how to do acrylic nails. After receiving her certificate in 1994, Michelle found jobs as a nail technician in two salons.



To Strengthen Michigan Families

Achiever of the Month

She worked two jobs for close to four years to build her clientele and provide for her family. In March 1998, with a solid clientele base, Michelle began working exclusively at a salon in the town where she lives. She continues to work there today.

Her success is shown by the fact that her cash assistance and food stamp cases are now closed. She continues to receive Transitional Medicaid, available for one year after the closure of her cash assistance.

Children motivated her

Michelle's family independence specialist, Nancy Rogers, spoke at the ceremony. Nancy talked about how Michelle is always pleasant to deal with, and is always forthcoming with her changes and needs.

"Michelle's children are her priority, and she makes sure they are involved in activities like karate," she said. "I can't imagine being a single parent raising two children, working, and going to school, too, not to mention doing so well academically."

Nancy pointed out that the definition of an achiever is a result brought about by persistence, and Michelle is the true definition of achiever.

"I am glad the state honors people like Michelle, and that it is great to see someone pursue their dreams and goals and accomplish so much," Nancy said. "I am proud of Michelle and wish her well in her future endeavors."

Krista Wilcox, Michelle's Work First case manager, told the audience about the services that



Above: Michelle Rios with Nancy Rogers.

Right: Michelle with her son and nephew after the ceremony.



helped Michelle in her endeavors. In 1999, through Work First, Michelle learned that she could receive additional educational opportunities through the Job Training Partnership Act program so she returned to school to give her even more employment options.

With the help of JTPA and student loans, Michelle enrolled in Montcalm Community College, and she is currently studying to be a medical office assistant. Work First also provided supportive services to Michelle to help her purchase school supplies and for car repairs. Once again, Michelle's hard work and belief in herself are paying off; she recently made the dean's list at Montcalm Community College.

Local rewards

Ionia Montcalm District FIA Board chair James Letts presented Michelle with congratulations and gifts on behalf of the Board. Board

vice chair Virginia Wood and members Ann Ebenstein and Mel Haga also attended the ceremony. The Board presented Michelle with a corsage, a \$50 gift certificate to a clothing store, and a \$50 gift certificate to a car maintenance shop. The Board also presented Michelle's two sons with gift certificates to McDonald's.

With all of these accolades said, Michelle got up to address the crowd of FIA and Work First staff, family, and friends. True to her nature, Michelle downplayed the tremendous success she has achieved. She had positive remarks for the audience, telling them that if you keep trying, you can make it.

Director Howard concluded the ceremony with a presentation to Michelle of an Achiever certificate and a gift certificate. The audience enjoyed punch and cookies while they congratulated Michelle on her outstanding accomplishments.

Employee Recognition Program continued from page 1

distinction on the work of selected employees from around the state. Colleagues or supervisors nominated award winners for their demonstrated excellence at work, the way they positively represent the FIA, and their community contributions. The award program will be held annually to honor representative employees. Information about the Employee Recognition Program is available on the FIA-Net under Reports, Spreadsheets and more. Here is a list of the honorees and their achievements, told by their nominators.

Sharon Christensen

**Director, Mecosta County FIA, Big Rapids
Nominated by the Mecosta County Management Team**

Sharon has worked for FIA for almost 30 years. She was a worker and supervisor in assistance payments, child welfare and MOST. She worked in Montcalm County and was interim director in Newaygo County before becoming the Mecosta County director in 1990.



Sharon is an outstanding administrator whose skills and experience have helped her gain the respect and admiration of staff. She is a strong motivator and encourages staff to achieve excellence by exceeding performance expectations while providing quality and compassionate service.

Sharon is well versed in the specific policies that affect the FIA and ES workers, as well as those issues related to children and adult services and administrative support. Her ability to remember details is often seen as amazing. In addition to her in-office duties Sharon serves on several committees. She is on the FIA-Net Steering Committee, Systems Committee, and acts as treasurer on the executive committee of the legislative board of the Adult-Health Services Committee and Advisory Board.

Sharon has supported many local office initiatives—an adult foster care Christmas party and summer picnic, the HIV/AIDS support group and quarterly staff recognition events are a few. For the office “Make a Difference Day” project she raked leaves for an elderly woman resident and waited tables at the local Big Boy to benefit foster care.

Sharon represents our agency on several boards and committees in the community. She is an active member of the Work Force Development Board, Human Services Coordinating Body, United Way, Youth Attention Center and Zonta Club.

Howard Cleveland

**Senior Information Technology Analyst in the
FIA Application System Development Division, Lansing
Nominated by Patricia Willet**



Howard Cleveland started with the FIA in 1989 as an entry-level programmer and has worked his way up to senior analyst. Howard is an excellent employee. He is calm in a crisis and has the ability to solve problems and dilemmas that others have a hard time working through.

He has a broad base of technical knowledge and works hard to keep up with the ever-changing technology by attending classes and doing individual research. Howard is considered to be the “answer man” in his division, the Information Technology Management Services Administration, and outside the Family Independence Agency. He is the person to go to when no one else can find a solution.

Howard is a team player who is always willing to help others with problems, even when it means he will be behind in his work and has to spend extra hours catching up to ensure that it gets done on time.

Howard is active in the community. He is a Meals on Wheels volunteer and provides computer assistance in his community when it is needed. He is a diligent, trustworthy and extremely capable employee who looks to the future and comes up with ways to help the team improve their performance.

Patricia Cook

**Protective Services Worker on Wayne County FIA's
24 hour emergency services staff, Detroit
Nominated by Catherine Nestale**



Patricia Cook has been with FIA more than 30 years. She came to CPS in 1971. She displays outstanding commitment to her job and is extremely knowledgeable about protective services policy and procedures, foster care, adult protective services and juvenile justice issues.

Patricia has a good grasp of contract and community resources and she is always willing to share this information with customers and staff.

She is an excellent resource. Her experience as a child therapist has provided staff with an onsite source of information about children's mental health issues. Patricia is an acknowledged leader. At the request of her coworkers and office management she worked out of class last year. In this capacity she demonstrated great organizational skills and a strong rapport with both staff and upper management.

Patricia is always willing to pitch in. She has volunteered to train overtime staff and even bathed, fed and changed a child's diaper when it was needed. She is representative of the best in our agency and her dedication to every element of child welfare extends to all of the children with whom she comes in contact.



Lynn Ettinger

**Senior Executive Management
Assistant
in the FIA Office of Communica-
tions, Lansing
Nominated by Karen Smith**

Lynn Ettinger has been an FIA employee for close to 30 years. She has worked for the Domestic Violence Treatment Board and other services

areas in Central Office. Lynn handles the business manager operations in the Office of Communications. Her duties include receiving media contacts and referring them to appropriate staff, coordinating training registration; arranging meetings and coordinating staff calendars.

Lynn handles her responsibilities with efficiency and professionalism and is one reason Communications is able to manage numerous events and issues. One of Lynn's tasks is to schedule, coordinate and staff the quarterly Statewide Director's meeting. This responsibility includes: serving as the primary liaison with conference sites to work out details of the event including meals, hotel arrangements, audio/visual needs and meeting rooms; preparation of conference agenda and coordinating assignment of staff breakout sessions. Planning events of this complexity requires excellent organization skills and the ability to handle details and changes. Lynn does all of this with ease.

Lynn anticipates issues and concerns for the office and deals with them without having to be given specific direction. Her contacts in and out of the FIA are invaluable. Her positive attitude and in-depth knowledge make her an excellent agency representative. Her dealings with our FIA staff and customers always reflect good customer service.

Lynn is one of the local leaders in "Caring about Kids", a nonprofit organization that raises funds for foster children in Ingham County. She devotes a lot of her personal time and energy to assist with the operation of this wonderful charity. She cares a lot about people and it is reflected in everything she does.

Employee Recognition Program

The Late George “Rick” Franz

Information Technology Technician

at Menominee County FIA, Menominee

Nominated by his coworkers at Menominee County FIA



Rich Miketinac

■ *Rich Miketinac represented staff and accepted the award on Rick’s behalf.*

As many of you may already know Rick lost his life in a tragic automobile accident last year. Rick Franz was hardworking, dedicated and completely positive. Regardless of the changing curve balls that were constantly being

thrown in his way, he always had a smile. His attitude was infectious and he often helped many of us make it through harried and stressful days.

Rick made one of the greatest quotes that I have ever heard: “I’ll never pass up an opportunity to keep my mouth shut.” He was without a doubt a very special and unique individual. He was able to find humor in situations most people would have only have been able to complain about.

Rick’s supervisor, Tom DeDamos said, “Rick was an excellent employee who accepted every task assigned to him without complaint. His tasks were always accurate and completed in a timely manner. He never stopped until the problem was solved. Filling his vacancy will be one of the toughest assignments of my supervisory career.”

Rick was not only a positive example at our local office, but as evidenced by the outpouring of messages from around the state on news of his death, he also had a positive effect on many others throughout our agency. I would like to read just one of the many messages we received from staff from around the state: “He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. What a wonderful man. Many a day his sense of humor lightened my spirits when they were low.”

Rick Franz will be missed. I accept this award on behalf of Rick, his family, friends and coworkers. Thank you for recognizing his contributions and dedication to our agency.

Steve Hinkley

Family Independence Manager in Antrim County FIA, Bellaire

Nominated by Janet Cushman



Steve Hinkley has worked for FIA for over 26 years. He has worked in a number of counties including Wayne, Kent, Ottawa, Otsego and Grand Traverse. In the last five years he has worked as an AP supervisor and family independence manager in Antrim County.

Steve’s supervisor, the Zone 2 AP specialist, and his peers describe Steve as an excellent manager. He has a strong customer service focus and continually tries to initiate improvements that will make his staff’s job easier.

In September 1999 the FIA was required to implement new MA-FIP related group composition and income budgeting policies. Because of these changes, everything had to be implemented quickly and there was no time to reprogram the changes into LOA2. A new MA-FIP related budget sheet was designed and budgets were going to have to be completed the “old fashioned way” by hand.

Steve spent many hours at work and on his own time developing an Excel spreadsheet that would automate the new MA-FIP related budgeting process. I worked with Steve in testing the spreadsheet. It was released to the local offices for statewide use at the end of September 1999. Steve’s automated Excel spreadsheet has saved hundreds of hours of work time for all FIA employees.

Steve is again using his excellent program policy knowledge and computer skills in developing an Excel worksheet that will automate the SER budgeting process. This worksheet is currently being tested and should be released to the local offices very soon.

In addition to his duties as a family independence manager, Steve represents the FIA in various outside agencies. He is past president of the Otsego County Red Cross and Otsego County Big Brothers and Big Sisters and former director and board member of Otsego AYSO soccer and Otsego County Jaycees.

Rita Hotchkin

**Buyer Manager in the
FIA Departmental Services Division, Lansing
Nominated by Donald Bos**



Rita has worked for FIA for over 22 years. She started with FIA as a typist, worked as a procurement technician, buyer and senior buyer. Rita is a great role model. She is a dedicated and responsible employee who has worked her way through the ranks and is now responsible for

two of the most complex functions in the Departmental Services Division.

In addition to her buyer manager and supervisory duties, Rita is the FIA coordinator for the MAIN ADPICS rollout and has oversight of the procurement card program for the FIA. She is FIA's foremost ADPICS expert and is relied upon by her colleagues across state government to help them resolve any ADPICS problems they may encounter.

Rita also serves as co-chair of the agency implementation panel for the CS138 process. She is a dynamic leader and is known throughout the state government as a trusted expert who can get the job done in spite of tight time frames or other complications. Rita backs up her expertise with a rare combination of energy, flexibility and responsiveness. She willingly takes on any assignment she is given, even when it is in a new area or one outside the traditional parameters of her position.

Her outlook is so positive she can turn any problem into a plus for others. She has strong team building skills and is always available to help coworkers and staff. She is highly regarded for her professionalism, personal integrity and problem solving skills. Over the years we have received a steady stream of commendation letters expressing admiration for her contributions.

Rita is an active adult leader in both the Girl Scouts and 4-H. In addition, she is a fine pianist and is well known for her involvement in the SOM Singers, a state employees choral group in Lansing.

Diane Kenefic

**Program Manager, Genesee Valley Regional Center, Flint
Nominated by Robert Gauthier**



Diane has been with the FIA for 10 years. Diane is a can do, super charged and upbeat individual who consistently displays compassion, understanding and respect for the ideas and feelings of others. She is a great example to staff and has the ability to share ideas, skills, talents, and wisdom.

Diane has virtually upgraded every function within the program. Her professionalism and diplomatic management style have enhanced her department. She makes it possible for all of us to do a better and more professional job. Her ability to prioritize is a key feature of her success. She is always willing to assist staff and regularly goes above and beyond what is expected of her, including coming in early and leaving late.

Diane's knowledge about substance abuse is an asset in our work with youth. She is a skilled counselor and always displays genuine interest when dealing with the concerns of staff and youth. I have often thought her middle name must be "care and concern" because she is always willing to help others. Diane is charismatic, dependable and a great leader. She has earned my utmost respect. My greatest wish is that she will remain with the Genesee Valley Regional Center for a very long time.

Diane is very involved in the community. She sings in her church choir and has participated in a variety of programs including Operation Brush Up, Habitat for Humanity, the Flint River Clean-Up and the Flint North End Soup Kitchen. She is always willing to lend a hand to anyone in need.

Note: Genesee Valley Regional Center is an FIA-operated facility that provides for the care and treatment of delinquent youth referred from the Probate and Circuit Courts.

Employee Recognition Program

Marcia Kus

Independent Living Specialist at the Wayne County FIA Redford District office, Redford
Nominated by Tina Seals

Marcia Kus has worked for FIA for over 15 years. She is an outstanding employee and very hard worker. Marcia demonstrates excellence in her overall job performance by serving her customers in a timely and professional manner. She regularly goes above and beyond what is expected, meeting with her customers after her scheduled work hours for their convenience and providing assistance by taking a customer to look for a new home.

Marcia has helped many families by purchasing clothes and toys for their children at Christmas. She cares for all of her customers and is committed to helping them build strong independent families. Marcia is extremely empathetic and tries to treat each customer with humanity and dignity.

She is very active in the community and often volunteers for the Paint the Town program. She also spends a lot of her time visiting schools and talking with children. Recently, she had the opportunity to speak with three kindergarten classes about her trip to Australia. She had a great time and the kids loved her. She donated books and pictures she had purchased during her trip to the school. Marcia is worthy of this recognition and has done a great job.



Charlotte Morris

Audit Liaison in the Office of Child Support, Lansing
Nominated by Michael Luea



Charlotte has worked for the FIA for 30 years, previous positions included child support specialist, contract specialist and policy analyst. Charlotte has consistently demonstrated her skill and overall excellence in handling some of the most difficult intra and inter agency assignments.

She has been a historian and overseer of both federal laws and of rules and regulations relating to child support policy and practice. Charlotte has competently represented the Office of Child Support with contractors, the courts and auditors. Her skill in getting to the heart of an issue is to be applauded and she has a keen understanding of how to navigate difficult or contentious situations.

While Charlotte is solution focused, she never loses sight of gifts, talents and contributions of others. She is very respectful and handles herself in a humane and professional manner. She is highly regarded by her colleagues.

In addition, she has helped the Office of Child Support by providing consultation to divisions within the agency to protect against audit exception, payment problems and correct interfacing between the office and outside agencies. Charlotte has also used her considerable talents to assist staff in locating background materials. Staff members from the Office of Child Support credit Charlotte with taking time from her busy schedule to provide insight into federal laws, rules, state and office policies.

Despite her full workload, Charlotte is actively involved in various ministries as well as neighborhood support groups.

Note: The day of the award ceremony was Charlotte's last as an FIA employee. She retired in June 2000.

Donna O'Grady

Acting Director of Gratiot County FIA, Ithaca

Nominated by Jim Nye



Donna has worked for our agency for over 26 years in a variety of positions: clerk typist, AP worker, AP supervisor, volunteer services coordinator and zone AP specialist. Currently, she is acting director of Gratiot County. As a zone AP specialist Donna has provided exceptional service to our staff, client-customers and agency

partners. She continuously seeks opportunities to improve collaborative relationships and provide consistency and support for zone and local office operations.

Donna sets very high standards for herself and can always be relied upon to do an outstanding job. Donna is always willing to take on new assignments and do the hard work to ensure success. She has demonstrated leadership, creativity and management skills in our Food Stamp Payment Accuracy initiative with the technical assistance teams, targeted case readings and policy simplifications.

Donna is a real problem-solver who works to meet the customers need—from their perspective. If the issue cannot be addressed in one way, she will develop multiple alternate solutions.

She works diligently to establish and maintain positive interagency relationships. She works regularly with Michigan departments of Career Development, Transportation and Community Health. Results of these efforts include our DCH-FIA regional forums to explain and coordinate our policies and programs for our mutual customers.

Donna has devoted much energy to further our working relationships with Career Development in regard to Project Zero services and Family Support Services/Employment Support Services coordination. Her work with MDOT has resulted in increased local Project Zero transportation resources and a consistent allocation process.

Donna has been active in the United Way as a board member, campaign chair and local president. She has also been a volunteer crisis line worker, board member and grant writer for a community domestic violence center.

**More Employee
Recognition Program
award accepters on
page 12**

Employee Recognition Program

Cynthia Smith

Eligibility Specialist at Wayne County FIA Warren-Conner District office, Detroit
Nominated by Barbara Fried



Cynthia has worked for FIA for 26 years. She has held a variety of positions—clerk typist, CIS operator, secretary and executive staff secretary for Central Office. Currently, she is an eligibility specialist. Cynthia is extremely conscientious in managing her caseload, meeting deadlines and adhering to agency priorities.

She goes beyond merely determining eligibility and will seek out community resources for customers if our agency does not provide the service. She anticipates the needs of her customers and tries to offer her assistance in any way possible. Cynthia is always courteous, prompt and efficient. She exemplifies quality customer service.

Her demeanor is professional, pleasant and cheerful. She greets customers and staff with a smile and a positive word. Cynthia is a member of Warren-Conner's Accuracy Cuts Errors Committee. This committee is composed of staff volunteers

who are leading the charge in reducing food stamp payment errors and increasing accuracy.

Cynthia is active in the community and has participated in a number of activities including Paint the Town, Walk for the Homeless, the Lovelight Foundation and annual FIA Christmas projects.

Rick Whitis

Foster Care Aid at Tuscola County FIA, Caro
Nominated by the director, Management Team and child welfare staff at Tuscola County



Rick has been an employee at Tuscola County FIA since January 1990. Prior to this he was employed as a resident care aide at the Oakdale Center for the Developmentally Disabled for 15 years. He has been an integral member of the child welfare staff since he began his employment. Rick is also a foster parent.

He has had extensive contacts with foster parents, foster children, birth parents and personnel from various agencies, including schools, Community Mental Health and medical providers. He is sensitive to the problems of others and is able to quickly establish rapport. Rick treats everyone with care and dignity and he is able to diffuse volatile situations with his kind, gentle and calm manner.

Rick is extremely organized and is able to juggle a multitude of tasks with ease. In addition, he has devised a specific program to track and maintain an accurate log of dental appointments and physicals for about 130 foster care children. He also completes billings for medical and psychological work, and sends for birth certificates and Social Security cards. Rick is often called upon to help other units or assist supervisors with copying material, locating lost cases or filing.

Rick has always done anything that is asked of him and is always willing to help people. He has assisted in transporting children with workers as early as 4:30 a.m. and as late as 11:30 p.m. Rick is flexible and will adapt his schedule to meet the needs of the unit.

Rick is a positive representative of the agency. He is respected by the foster parents, community agency personnel, court and prosecuting attorney staff, birth parents and FIA staff. He is an outstanding employee with a rare gift of being able to communicate with children as well as adults.

NASW Michigan honors two FIA workers

Debra Cain of Lansing is Public Citizen of the Year

Christopher Stabile of Sault Ste. Marie awarded Lisa Putman Award

Information: Tracy Padot

Telephone (800) 292-7871

In Lansing call 487-1548

E-mail: nasw-michigan.padot@usa.net

LANSGING - The National Association of Social Workers Michigan chapter endowed a pair of FIA employees with special awards in May.

The organization awarded Debra Cain of Lansing as its 2000 Public Citizen of the Year and Christopher Stabile of Sault Ste. Marie as 2000 winner of the Lisa Putman Award for Excellence in Child Welfare. Both were presented awards during the association's annual conference May 19 in Mt. Pleasant.

Stabile has been active in the public child welfare arena since 1975. He has worked his way up the ranks from worker in the Child Services Foster Care Delinquency Division of Children's Protective Services to his current position as second line supervisor program manager for Chippewa and Luce counties.

While working full time, Stabile also manages to maintain a 4.0 GPA as a master's degree student in Grand Valley State University's School of Social Work.

Stabile has a unique and intimate knowledge of public child welfare services in Michigan. He has shared that knowledge with the Bay Mills Tribe of Chippewa Indian Child Protective Services workers. In addition, Stabile was instrumental in coordinating an after hours, on-call service of CPS workers for both the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and the Bay Mills Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

Stabile is very active in the Chippewa Indian Community, serving



Christopher Stabile and Debra Cain

on several committees as well as volunteering his time with the Big Brothers-Big Sisters program and the United Way.

Stabile's work for the children of Chippewa and Luce counties epitomizes the image of the Lisa Putman for Excellence in Child Welfare award.

Cain is the executive director of the Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board of Michigan, a unit administered through the FIA. Cain previously served as director of the Violence Against Women Training Institute and as the Executive Director of HAVEN, Oakland County's sexual assault and domestic violence program. From 1992-96, she was the director of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Cain represented the state of

Michigan for four years as a board member on the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. In 1995, Gov. John Engler appointed her as a member of the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board.

Cain is a founding member of the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic Violence, served on the board of directors of the Sexual Assault Information Network, and is a past chairperson of the Tri-County Coalition Against Domestic Violence. In 1990 Cain served as the spokesperson for the National Domestic Violence hotline.

Cain's years of commitment and devotion to helping stop domestic violence embody the spirit of the NASW Michigan chapter's Public Citizen of the Year.

The National Association of Social Workers is the oldest and largest nonprofit organization of professional social workers with 155,000 members. It has more than 8,500 Michigan members. NASW serves members and advocates for sound social policy.

Professional social workers practice in many settings including: family service agencies, community mental health centers, schools, hospitals, employee assistance programs, and public and private agencies. Professional social workers provide more than half of the nation's mental health services and offer vital services to individuals, families and communities. A professional social worker has a social work degree and meets state legal requirements.

FIA-university agreement nets 34 May graduates

FIA employees graduate with MSW degree with a child welfare specialty

Information: Francisca Vasconcellos

FIA Office of Professional Development

Telephone (517) 335-0576

Since autumn 1997 the Family Independence Agency has had cooperative agreements with six Michigan universities for FIA staff in local office child welfare positions to earn a master's in social work degree with a child welfare specialty. Through this program the FIA provides additional opportunities for local child welfare staff to enhance knowledge and practices leading to better services.

About 150 employees participate in the program annually. A small group of about 13 employees graduated during 1999. The first large group (34) graduated in May 2000.

These employees received financial education assistance from the FIA in the form of 90 percent partial tuition refund, job and field placement accommodations. In return, these employees have agreed to continue working for the FIA for four years following graduation. May 2000 graduates from the program include:



| University | Employee name | County or District Office |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Eastern Michigan University | Gainer, Terese | Genesee |
| | Johnson, Carolyn | Oakland |
| Grand Valley State University | Christensen, Roberta | Ionian |
| | Land, Pamela | Muskegon |
| | Knoop, Julie | Lake |
| | Wolf, Erin | Manistee |
| Michigan State University | Baxter-Brown, Kimberly | Genesee |
| | Campbell, Dawn | Clinton |
| | Chamberlain, Sha-Ron | Ingham |
| | Crist-Colon, Joelle | Ingham |
| | DeRose, Mary | Ingham |
| | Edelen, Future | Genesee |
| | Eberhard (Zapoli), Cynthia | Ingham |
| | Holton, Mary | Eaton |
| | Johnson, Michelle | Genesee |
| | Jones, Paula | Genesee |
| | Marchyok, Douglas | Livingston |
| | McBurrows, Patricia | Ingham |
| | Prince-Coleman, Anita | Genesee |
| | Szczepanski-Tomczak, Stacy | Midland |
| | Timm, Dawn | Clinton |
| | Wilson, Randall | Ingham |
| | Winningham, Sophia | Genesee |
| University of Michigan | Cavanaugh, Suzanne | Wayne, North Central CFS |
| Wayne State University | Esaw-Warfield, Jacqueline | Wayne, Central Operations CFS |
| | Holt-Sanford, Jacqueline | Wayne, Central Operations CFS |
| | Latta, Sonia | Wayne, Central Operations CFS |
| | Lawrence, Jeannie | Wayne, Central Operations CFS |
| | Magee, JoAnne | Wayne, South Central CFS |
| | Pompey, Tanya | Wayne, South Central CFS |
| | Rolank, LaWanna | Wayne, South Central CFS |
| | White, Francine | Wayne, Western Wayne CFS |
| Western Michigan University | Mecomber, Jane | Kalamazoo |

400 justice practitioners attend recent conference

Balanced and restorative justice is the focus

Judges, law enforcement, educators and others get close-up review of BARJ

ACME—About 400 people attended “Healing Responses to Juvenile Crime”, Michigan’s second juvenile justice conference on balanced and restorative justice, held May 15-17 at the Grand Traverse Resort near Traverse City.

The FIA Office of Juvenile Justice hosted this event as part of a continuing effort to provide education and an exchange of ideas on balanced and restorative justice (BARJ, called “bar-jay”). The diverse audience included representatives of courts, law enforcement agencies, juvenile justice administrators and practitioners, victim advocates, educators, Tribal community members and community members-at-large.

FIA deputy director Mark Jasonowicz welcomed conference participants May 15 saying, “We believe restorative justice can be a win-win situation for both those who have harmed and those who have been harmed.”

Balanced and restorative justice has been gaining strength throughout the United States during the past two decades as an alternative philosophy of crime and justice. Although it focuses on holding offenders accountable to their victims for the harm they have caused, BARJ differs substantially from the traditional retributive justice system which is offender and punishment focused.

In a restorative system, victims, offenders and communities all play key roles in achieving justice through reparation of the harm

caused by crime. Victim needs and services are central to the process.

At this year’s conference, a special emphasis was placed on enhancing the overall awareness of attendees regarding the role of the victim in a restorative justice process.



If restorative justice is to be applied fully, the centerpiece must include the persons whose injuries need to be healed. Key conference speakers included:

- Dennis Maloney, director of Deschutes County Community Corrections in Bend, Ore.
- Anne Seymour, a national consultant and victim advocate from Washington, D.C.
- Azim Khamisa, founder and president of the Tariq Khamisa Foundation in San Diego, Calif.
- Marty Price, director of the Victim and Offender Reconciliation Program Information and Resource Center in Camas, Wash.
- Clay Yeager, executive director of The Children’s Partnership in Shippenburg, Pa.

In addition to presentations by these speakers, 18 workshops were presented covering a wide variety of topics during the three-day event.

Speaking to the conference May 16, FIA director Douglas E. Howard said in addition to many activities related to restorative justice occurring throughout the state and its communities, Michigan is part of a national initiative.

“Michigan has been selected by the United States Department of Justice as one of eight states to receive technical assistance on restorative justice,” said Howard. “A team from Michigan meets with teams from the other states for an exchange of information and ideas.” The other states are California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

This partnership enhances opportunities for continued advancement toward Michigan’s goal of balanced and restorative justice as the framework for all juvenile justice services statewide.

Working with the FIA to co-sponsor this year’s conference were the Michigan Supreme Court, Michigan State University School of Social Work, Michigan Committee on Juvenile Justice, Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency, Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant Ad Hoc Committee, Delinquency Advisory Committee, National Office for Victims of Crime, Michigan Probate Judges Association and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Leelanau County group feted with national award

Family Coordinating Council wins United Way "Community Builder Award"

Marois: community collaborative is the reason for our success in Project Zero

LOS ANGELES, Calif.—Because of its ability to change things for the better through community collaboration, the Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council earned a national United Way award in April.

At its 2000 community leaders' conference in the City of Angels, the United Way bestowed its "Organizational Community Builder Award" on the Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council, a community collaborative project.

"The group successfully collaborated and used consensus decision-making to strengthen their communities in ways that benefit children, youth and their families," said the United Way.

The award was presented by Dimon McFerson and Betty Beene, board chairman and CEO of the United Way, and Carol Jenkins Barnett, the conference co-chair.

The coordinating council is a grassroots effort that implements systems reform by significantly changing the way human services are delivered to residents of Leelanau County, a small rural community in the northwestern Lower Peninsula. Leelanau County Family Independence Agency director Mary Marois is a member of the Family Coordinating Council.

"We were thrilled the governor's office thought so much of our program to nominate us for the award," she said. "When we won I couldn't believe it. It was clear to the United Way that what we do is exceptional."

Marois called her work in the community collaborative "the most important thing I do in my job." She said it was the single most important



The winning team from Leelanau County (left to right): Betsy Fisher, director of the Family Court; Mary Marois, FIA director; Margie McNabb, coordinator, Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council; Becky Beauchamp, director, Northwest Michigan United Way; Egan Cypher, Leelanau County FIA Project Zero coordinator.

reason that Leelanau County, as a Project Zero site, has been at zero for 17 consecutive months.

"When someone comes through our door needing help and they don't qualify for our programs, we make the call to other members of the collaborative to help them locate the help.

"We worked together cooperatively for a long time to develop a one-stop shopping concept. It changed our idea of service as a local FIA office. The notion that 'it's not my job' is not in our vocabulary. We have succeeded because of the community collaboration, not in spite of it."

The coalition represents more than 100 Leelanau County civic, social and business groups as well as

government, courts, schools, churches and the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indian Tribal communities. In 1996, the council developed a community plan with a vision for, "Safe, healthy children living in stable nurturing families who are supported by strong communities that provide comprehensive supportive services." Since then the council has put into action many initiatives including:

- Community Family Resource Centers throughout the county.
- A toll-free information and referral telephone line.
- Need-specific community work groups such as the Family Support Team and Family Prevention Team.
- A school-community connection

continues on page 17

Family Reunification Program looking good

**Lt. Governor, Skillman Foundation report positive results of evaluation
Another \$5 million proposed to expand program**

LANSING—Lieutenant Governor Dick Posthumus reported encouraging results from a Skillman Foundation study of the FIA's Family Reunification Program during a news conference May 4.



Dick Posthumus

According to the report, the program successfully reunified children with their families 85 percent of the time in the period studied from 1992-96. As a result, the Engler administration has recommended \$5 million in the fiscal year 2001 budget to expand this model from five to 10 sites around the state. Fiscal year 2001 begins Oct. 1.

"The findings of this study are significant and support our policy to maintain or reunify families whenever it is safe and appropriate to do so," said Posthumus. "Keeping families together safely – that's what it's all about."

Family reunification is a key part of Michigan's comprehensive curriculum of care for children who are at risk of abuse, neglect or family dissolution. The program helps birth families raise children well by providing them with support services.

Michigan's family reunification program was implemented from 1992 to 1996 at three contract agency sites in a 12-county area of southeastern Michigan. It was created in response to the growing public concern about the increasing number of children placed in out-of-home care, such as foster care, and the lack of effective family-based alternatives.

The goal was to provide intensive, home-based services resulting in an early return home for the children involved. Family reunification personnel worked with families to participate in a strength-based assessment, family or individual therapy, parenting skill classes and family workshops. Staff also conducted regular ongoing assessments of risks to the children.

The Skillman Foundation funded and University Associates, Inc. conducted an evaluation of this landmark program, believed to be the first study of its kind. Major findings of the study include:

- The program was effective in reunifying families by enabling 85 percent of the children who completed the program to return and remain home safely without evidence of abuse or neglect. After 12 months, 85 percent of these children were able to remain in their homes com-

pared to 68.6 percent of the state-wide foster care children.

- Children who experienced an additional out-of-home placement after receiving family reunification services returned home in a shorter period of time than those who did not receive services.

- The program was cost effective, saving the state \$5,283 per child for 18 months following the return of the child from out-of-home placement.

- The program was equally effective for families typically considered "hard to serve."

"The Skillman Foundation, University Associates, private agencies and local FIA offices developed a service model that keeps children safe, strengthens families and saves money," said FIA director Douglas E. Howard. "We are pleased this partnership contributed to such successful outcomes."

Leelanau County award *from page 16*

modeled after the successful national "bridges" program that ties schools to needs in the community.

- An age 0-3 program that targets healthy living assistance to young mothers with young children.

- A program called "Give 'em 40-7-24" that works through the local United Way office to build assets and involve young people in the community.

"The Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council has been recognized nationally and internationally as a model for strengthening communities to support families," said the United Way.

The United Way gave only two awards at its conference—the Community Builder Award to Leelanau County and the James J. Renier Community Building Award to Rev. Kenneth Robinson of Memphis, Tenn.

The awards were given based on competitive nominations submitted to the United Way. For more information on the Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council, contact Mary Marois at (231) 256-6106. For more information on the United Way community builders program, see the United Way of America website: www.unitedway.org

Project Zero programs continue to reach “zero”

Branch County is 45th to reach standard

Wayne County Medbury-Concord district is 46th

The Branch County Project Zero program reached “zero” May 18. Less than two weeks later, the Wayne County FIA Medbury-Concord District reached “zero” May 31. It is the 46th project locale to reach zero since 1997.

“Zero” is the point in time when all target Family Independence Program cases that should be working are doing so and earning income. Project Zero’s goal is to reduce to zero the number of target FIP families without earned income. A target case is one open 60 days or longer that is expected to participate in Work First activities, work and earn income.

“Branch County FIA director Connie Dykman, her staff and community partners did a great job,” said FIA director Douglas E. Howard. “Congratulations also to Wayne County FIA director Jerome Rutland, Medbury-Concord district manager Carol Thomas, her staff and community partners.”

Both Branch County and the Medbury-Concord district, which serves an East Side Detroit neighborhood, joined Project Zero in October 1999.

Medbury-Concord district manager Thomas said the collaboration between FIA, Work First and community partners produced their accomplishment. She said the accomplishment of reaching “zero” is an empowering experience for her staff. “Our staff told me, ‘If we can do this, we can do anything,’” Thomas said. “It is a very positive experience that brings great enthusiasm to our work.”

Thomas said Work First contrac-

tors Reemployment Transition Center, Wayne County Jobs and Arab-Chaldean Council, all with offices in Detroit, were critical to success. She said the Wayne County Community Coordinated Child Care (4C) office gave important services to district customers. “4C staff were located in our office. They trained people to be relative care aids and helped customers with provider assistance.”

“Galilee Missionary Church (in Detroit) was very helpful providing clothing and mentoring,” she said. “They let us use their facility and were very supportive of our staff and their efforts.”

Branch-Hillsdale

County FIA director Dykman said the county reached zero because of hard work, cooperation and a strong local economy. “Reaching zero was a combination of exceptional cooperation between the FIA, Work First and 4C,” said Dykman.

She said the Work First contractor, Foundation for Behavioral Resources, began a new transit service that helped people get to new jobs distant from their homes.

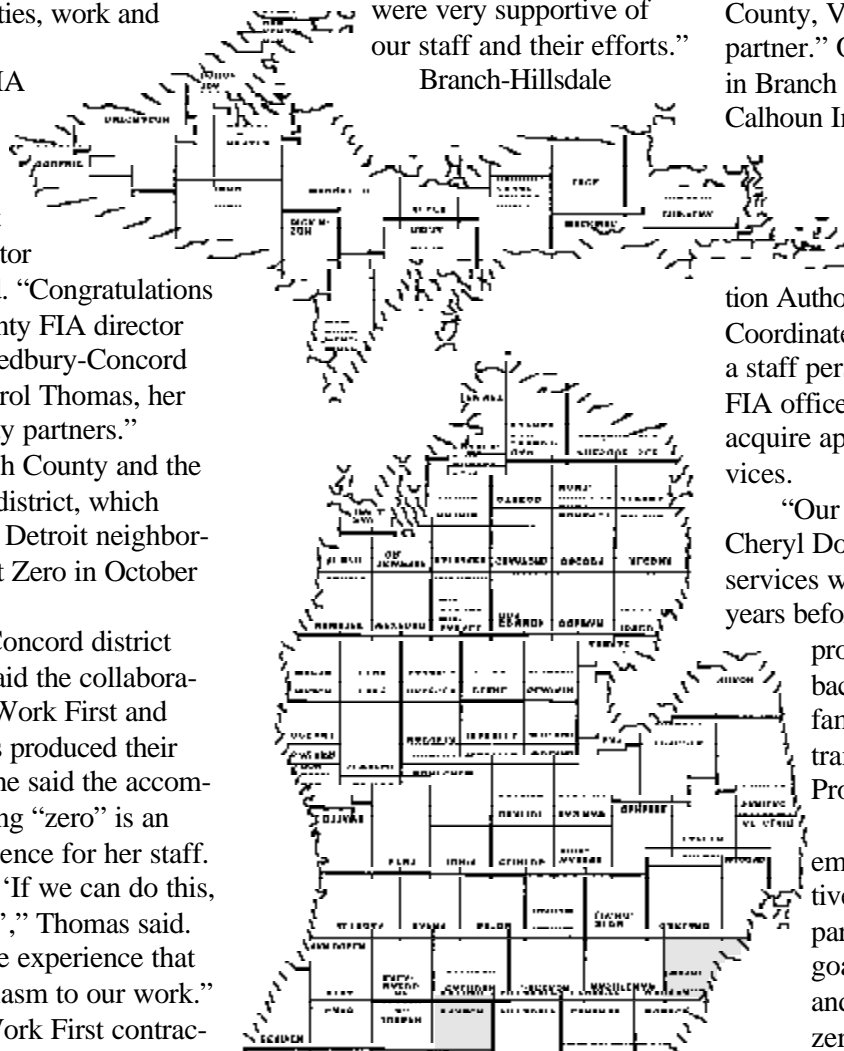
“Work First has had a seven-day 24-hour van service in place for several months that helped people get to work,” Dykman said. “In Branch County, Victoria Hicks was our local partner.” Other community partners in Branch County include: the Calhoun Intermediate School District,

which is the Michigan Works Agency representing the county; Branch Area Transportation Authority; and Community

Coordinated Child Care, which places a staff person in the Branch County FIA office to help new customers acquire appropriate child care services.

“Our Project Zero coordinator, Cheryl Downs, was a children’s services worker for more than 20 years before coming into this project,” said Dykman. “Her background in working with families to resolve crises transferred perfectly to Project Zero.”

“Branch County FIA employees worked cooperatively with each other and partner agencies to meet our goals. They were wonderful and very focused on reaching zero.”



April caseload lowest in 30 years

Engler: more people than ever trading welfare checks for paychecks

Family Independence Summer Project expected to help reduce caseload even more

The April Family Independence Program (FIP) average caseload was lower than anytime in 30 years.

In April, the average daily caseload was 72,430, the lowest it has been since April 1970, when the caseload was 71,758. About 38,000 of the April cases were child only or

deferred cases, meaning only about 34,000 cases represented work ready adults.

"Today's announcement is reason to celebrate," said Gov. John Engler when announcing the news May 18. "Record numbers of people have traded a welfare check for a paycheck."

"Few believed the cash assistance caseload would decline this much when we began our welfare reform program in 1992. We expect to see continued reductions as the FIA starts the Family Independence Summer Project."

The summer project began June 1 and will run through August. It will focus on FIP families who have not been able to find a steady job in 13 large counties. Families with a member having a disability can participate in voluntary activities in Kent and Berrien counties.

Adults required to participate in the summer project may be involved in literacy, life skills, home management or other training to help them overcome barriers to employment. Their children will be offered opportunities to participate in tutoring and day camp activities. Older youth will be connected with Summer Youth Employment.

The FIP caseload has declined by 68 percent since March 1994, when it totaled 226,863 cases, the highest number in recent years.

"I am proud and pleased with our customers' success as they enter the work force and become independent of public assistance," said FIA director Douglas E. Howard.

"I hear wonderful success stories as I travel about the state. Welfare reform is making a big difference in people's lives."

April data show 66,568 families qualified for child care assistance from FIA, representing 124,389 children. Of those families, 18,539 are current or former FIP recipients.

■ For more information, visit the Family Independence Agency website at www.mfia.state.mi.us

Photo Story



MONROE—The Monroe County FIA Six Weeks to Wellness group sponsored a "Health Awareness Day" May 1. "Expert speakers were invited to talk with staff on a variety of health related topics throughout the day," said Angulnette Jenerette, Monroe County FIA director.

Topics included iridology and nutritional supplements, alternative medicine, yoga and mediation, self defense, stress management and office ergonomics, fitness, health and exercise.

Jenerette said Helena McPherson, Monroe County coordinator for Six Weeks to Wellness, was instrumental in planning the activities, which included healthy snacks.

"Overall it was a great way to enrich employees' knowledge and encourage everyone to continue to stay in a state of good health."

●
Note: Renae Banks-Rouser was acting director at Monroe County FIA from May 15 until Angie Jenerette's return from medical leave June 12. "(Banks-Rouser) had most recently been working at Genesee County FIA as a Family Independence Program section manger," said Zone 4 manager Janet Burch.

“Love bug” virus had limited impact on state government, no reported effect in FIA

Gongwer News Service
Lansing, Mich.
May 5, 2000

State government computers were largely unaffected by the spread of the destructive “I Love You” virus that crippled many systems worldwide during the first week in May. Computer experts called the virus the most damaging ever in the history of the Internet, with copycat viruses spreading through systems on May 5.

Officials for Michigan Department of Management and Budget said the state’s defenses were helped by advance notice from alerts after the virus hit other systems. State firewalls between its systems and the Internet were also helpful, as was the fact that most state agencies use an e-mail program other than the Microsoft Outlook program for which the virus was apparently written.

Only Michigan departments of Corrections and Consumer and Industry Services (CIS) reported significant impact from the virus that destroys data files and disables e-mail systems.

CIS shut down its gateways to the Internet for about two hours after a few employees received the e-mail message containing the virus, but department spokesperson Maura Campbell said no files were damaged. Corrections spokesperson Matt Davis said about 2,500 image files were wiped out on computers, but the loss was minimized by the availability of backup copies. There were no reported negative affects in FIA systems.

Family Independence Agency
Office of Communications
P O Box 30037
Lansing MI 48909

Return Service Requested

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LANSING, MI
PERMIT NO. 1200

For information about FIA programs, consult our Internet web address: www.mfia.state.mi.us

The Family Independence Agency will not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, color, marital status, political beliefs or disability. If you need help with reading, writing, hearing, etc., under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are invited to make your needs known to an FIA Office in your county.